



Wildland Fire in Wisconsin

Summarizing the Highlights of 2004 and the Future of our Program

*A Special Report
From the Wisconsin
Department of Natural Resources*



A Word From Your Fire Supervisor

February 15, 2005

Dear Colleagues,

It has been an active year in the Division of Forestry and Bureau of Forest Protection. Many issues that are critical to the success of our long-term programs are moving forward in a positive direction. Though we have several more on the horizon to deal with.

As the saying goes, "Change is the only constant in life". From my perspective, the important aspect is to manage change towards a positive outcome for the program. In that regards we are currently undertaking several critical studies that will set the stage for the future direction in several programmatic areas. These include:

- 🔥 Forestry Law Enforcement (forestry, fire and recreation law enforcement)
- 🔥 Firefighter Physical Fitness
- 🔥 Forestry Aerial Resources (single engine air tankers; helicopters; CL-215)

I am excited by the work these teams are accomplishing and look forward to their recommendations and development of implementation plans in 2005.

Change has also been evident this past year in that the Forestry Program has taken on the supervision of the Department's aviation unit and radio communications program. The aircraft pilots have maintained a positive attitude throughout a difficult transition and continued time of uncertainty. The pilots have steadfastly continued their primary mission of providing avionics service to the Department and partner agencies, while integrating into the Forestry Program by accomplishing key programmatic work objectives. The radio communication program has been very successful in developing internal and external partnerships and in beginning to develop a strategic direction for the radio communication infrastructure that our forest fire management and law enforcement programs depend on.

Change is evident in that the past couple of years we have initiated several new programs to address long standing issues within the forest fire management program. This includes the reinvigoration of the Cooperative Fire Program; development of a first class Wildland Urban Interface program; and implementation of Hazard Mitigation Projects. The reaction to these new program directions both internally and from our external partners has been overwhelmingly positive. In fact, the Crystal Lake Association was recognized

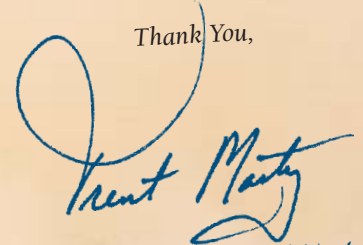
by Governor Doyle, and nationally, as Wisconsin's first "FireWise Community". I envision these programmatic areas continuing to grow in the future and becoming a greater part of our mission.

Partnerships are critical to the success of program and can influence change in a positive way. Examples of these efforts in 2004 are:

- 🔥 The Department has been the leader in the development of the Wisconsin Interagency Fire Council (WIFC) with our federal fire management counterparts. WIFC has already paid direct benefits in providing joint forest fire training opportunities that otherwise would not have been available in Wisconsin.
- 🔥 A partnership that will pay huge dividends in the future is with the UW-Stevens Point, Wisconsin Center for Environmental Education in the development of a K-12 forest fire prevention curriculum.
- 🔥 Through Forestry's initiative, an intra-agency partnership has lead to the development of a Department Incident Command Center in GEF 2.
- 🔥 Another inter-agency partnership currently in the development stages is between the Department and Emergency Management that will hopefully provide emergency access to the Army Reserve National Guard helicopters for forest fire suppression activities in Wisconsin.

In summary, change is the only constant. Through diligent planning and involvement of personnel from all levels throughout our organization we have managed change to influence positive outcomes. I realize we are going to be continually challenged with difficult issues and decisions, but feel confident that we can continue to manage and improve our programs to serve the citizens of Wisconsin.

Thank You,



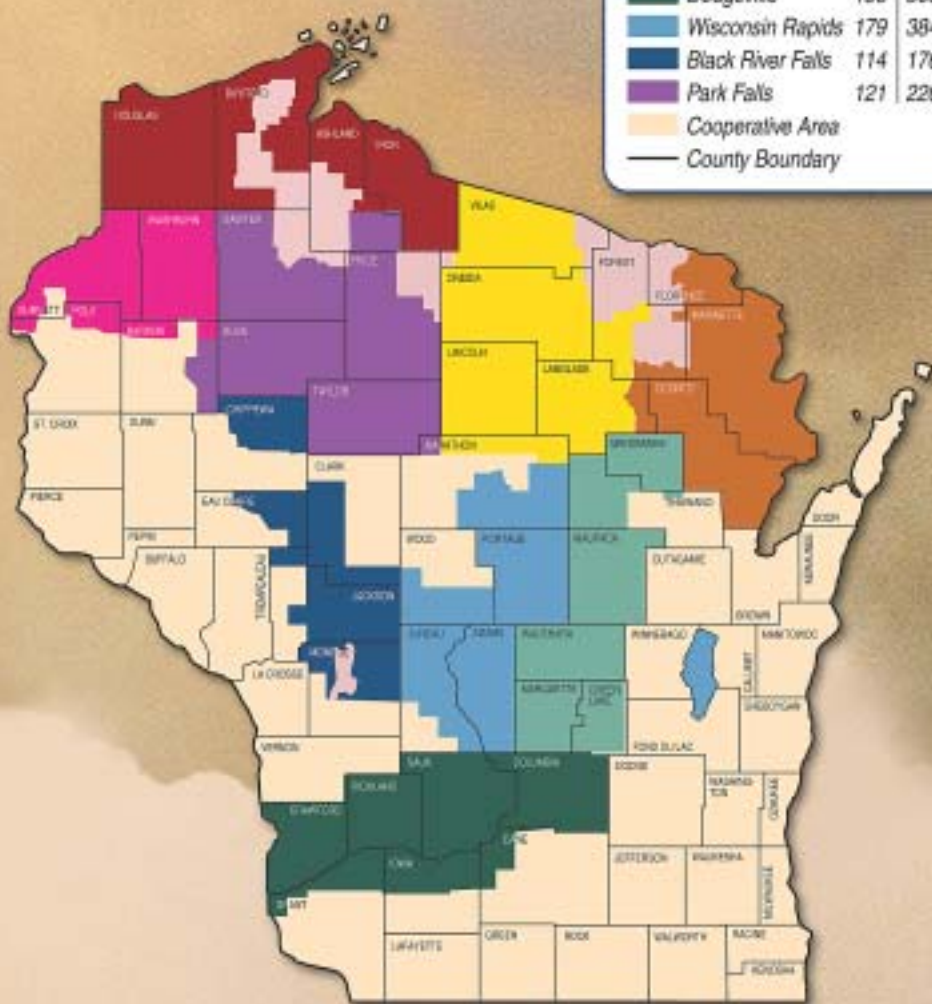
Trent Marty

Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources
Bureau Director, Forest Protection



Number of Fires and Acres Burned by Dispatch Group in 2004

County	Fires	Acres
Brule	93	65
Cumberland	82	153
USFS Areas	20	12
Woodruff	123	93.11
Peshigo	98	282
Waupaca	170	274.76
Dodgeville	156	503.6
Wisconsin Rapids	179	384.41
Black River Falls	114	176.39
Park Falls	121	226.36
Cooperative Area		
County Boundary		



Exciting Changes – Aeronautics Moves to the Division of Forestry

On July 1st, the Division of Forestry became home to the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, Aeronautics Section. The transfer was approved by the Department of Administration delegating twelve Aeronautics pilot positions be moved from DNR Administration to Forestry. Pilots are located at five bases throughout the State: Madison, Oshkosh, Rhinelander, Siren and Eau Claire. In addition to the pilot cadre, Forestry took operational control of eleven airplanes assigned to the DNR by DOA. Department pilots fly a variety of missions. Detection and suppression of wildland fires, supporting DNR law enforcement efforts to include boating/snowmobile accidents, surveys such as, wolf, sturgeon and elk, and air monitoring missions, are only a few. The DNR pilot also assists agencies outside of the Department providing life saving surveillance during natural disasters, hostage situations, homicides and now Homeland Security. The Division of Forestry has assured Department employees and State citizens, professional pilots willing to answer the call to serve.

Greg Stacey
Wisconsin DNR
Aeronautics Section Chief



2004 Fire Season – Highlighting Three Fires

The 2004 fire season posted 1,135 fires, which burned 2,158 acres. Each and every fire season as well as each individual fire poses their own risks and challenges due to fuel types, weather conditions, access, resource availability and numerous other issues. It is impossible to discuss all the fires the state has experienced over the last year but here is a glimpse of three fires that occurred in 04. These 1,135 fires might not have been the catastrophic types that we have seen in the past years but they were responsible for at least 1 fatality and 11 reported injuries caused by or related to wildland fires. The damage done by these wildfires still amounted in the thousands of dollars to the citizens of Wisconsin in loss of private property and damaged forest products. *Many of these fires could have been prevented with simple precautions taken by the parties responsible for causing fires.*

*Jim Barnier
Wisconsin DNR
Forest Fire Suppression Specialist*

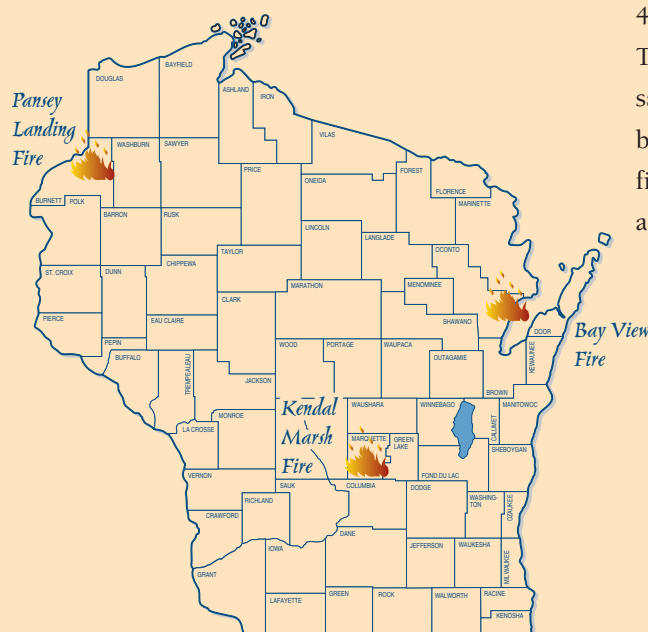
Pansey Landing Fire

SESW 12 41 16W



The Pansey Landing fire occurred in Burnett County on April 15 and burned for more than

half a mile and consumed 71 acres. The fire was reported to the Burnett County Dispatch by a citizen driving by the fire. It initiated on private and county forest lands and burned across the properties of two other private landowners before DNR, Webb Lake and Danbury fire departments could stop and control the wildland fire. The fire developed quickly in the jack pine reproduction with some crown out, trees fully engulfed in flame. It then moved into open fields, skipping over corn fields and moving into an oak timber stand, where 4 DNR tractor plows and 1 Single Engine Air Tanker stopped the blaze. The suppression forces saved 1 structure and a valuable red pine plantation by the flanking action taken. In total it took 35 fire fighters and 22 pieces of fire fighting equipment at a cost of \$6,535.00 to suppress this fire.



Kendall Marsh Fire

NWSE 02 15 10E



The Kendall Marsh fire occurred in Marquette County on April 04 and burned 45 acres. The fire was started by a local citizen burning debris in a barrel. The fire quickly moved into a marsh area and required quick action by the Incident Commander to deploy two low ground suppression units, three type 6 engines and one tractor plow and initiate a backfire to stop the forward spread of the fire. The backfire was critically supported by the DNR air attack for safety observations prior to and during the backfire tactical operation. Complete suppression was done by DNR, Menominee Tribal Enterprises, Montello and Princeton Fire Departments. It took 1 1/5 hours by all suppression forces to contain this fire. The responsible party was billed and paid \$1,865.00 in suppression cost and issued a citation for burning without a permit, \$156.20.

The Bay View Fire

NWNE 29-28-22



The Bay View fire occurred in Oconto County on May 04 and burned 215 acres. The fire originated from a controlled burn within the city limits of the city of Oconto. The fire spread through marsh and could be seen from Door County

across the bay of Green Bay. Two tractor plows, two ATVs, DNR air attack, Oconto and Pensaukee fire departments were utilized to control the fire. The main suppression tactic was triple furrows with burnout. It took about 2 hours to obtain containment. The fire perimeter was about 5 miles, but only 1.07 miles of dozer line was constructed as the left flank was contained by the bay of Green Bay. The responsible party was billed and paid suppression cost of \$1,487.90.

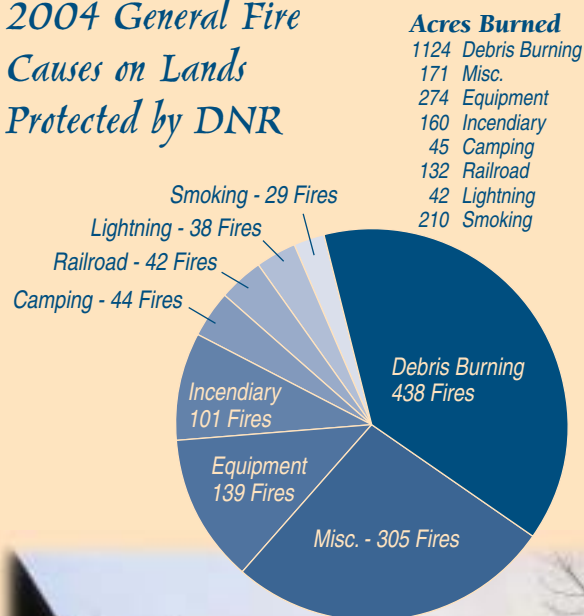
"Our suppression resources have met the needs of the Wisconsin citizens in minimizing the average size per fire. In turn, this efficiency of DNR fire fighters has greatly reduced the potential cost and damage cause by wildland fires. This is significantly lower than in years past, but does reflect the number of fires and acres burned in 2004."

*Jim Barnier
Forest Fire Suppression Specialist*

2004 Fire Department Grant Update

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources administers two grant programs that award monies to Wisconsin Fire Departments and County Fire Associations to improve fire protection in their communities. This year, the Volunteer Fire Assistance (VFA) grant awarded sixteen (16) Wisconsin County Fire Associations a total of \$113,000. The Forest Fire Protection (FFP) grant will award 255 Wisconsin Fire Departments a total of \$800,000.

2004 General Fire Causes on Lands Protected by DNR



Both grant programs are 50/50 cost share; the local organization matches the state or federal share.

The VFA grant relies on federal dollars to support County Fire Associations. The FFP grant relies on a mixture of state and federal dollars to improve local Fire Departments' capabilities in controlling and managing wildland fires.

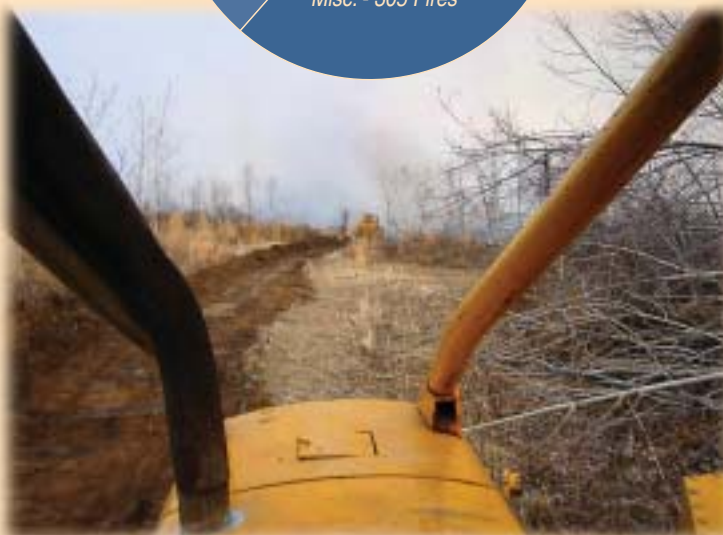
The VFA grant had applications with \$477,000 worth of project proposals from 20 county fire associations. Four (4) associations were not able to be funded. The maximum VFA grant award is \$10,000 for any one association. These grants support county wide fire protection projects. This year, county communications upgrade projects were a commonly funded use of VFA grant monies.

The FFP grant had applications with \$2.2 million dollars worth of project proposals from 293 Fire Department applications. 255 Fire Departments were funded, 15 Fire Departments were not funded and 23 applications were ineligible. The maximum FFP grant award is \$10,000 for any one Fire Department. All of these grant awards assist local

Fire Departments in improving wildland protective clothing, forest fire suppression equipment and communications.

Next year, it is anticipated that the funding levels will be maintained near the current levels. Consult the DNR webpage at www.dnr.wi.gov/org/land/forestry/Fire/firedept.htm for the latest grant program details.

Chris Klahn
Wisconsin DNR
Cooperative Forest Fire Specialist



US Forest Service Fire Program Review

Last summer, the US Forest Service conducted a comprehensive review of Wisconsin's fire management program. In the course of the review, they spoke with a number of folks from the Bureau of Forest Protection, and spent much time in the field visiting ranger stations, fire departments and other beneficiaries of our program's efforts. Their report, still only in draft, had high praise for much of our program, and many of our personnel.

Of particular note were our efforts in partnering with others. Excellent relationships with fire departments, including training and equipping through grant opportunities was cited as an important component of the overall suppression effort. They noted how well the stage is set for the coop fire program to take off. Also recognized was the development of our relationship with the Crystal Lake Community, which led to Wisconsin's first Firewise Community. There was also recognition of our productive working relationship with The Nature Conservancy.

The newly arrived Aeronautics Section was hailed as an excellent addition to the forestry program, and there was recognition for the excellent use and performance of that part of the program. The excellent equipment fabrication efforts done in the LeMay Center were noted as crucial to our continued excellence in suppression efforts.

Our approach to training has been comprehensive and effective, we have had an excellent safety record, and we have been a leader in developing partnerships with particular note of the Great lakes Forest Fire Compact, and the initiation of the Wisconsin Interagency Fire Council, with our in-state fire partners.

There was some concern expressed about the pace at which corrections are being made in our Federal Excess Property Program, but the improvements that have been made were acknowledged. Overall, Wisconsin's fire program is widely recognized as a leader, both in the northeastern area and the United States.

Blair Anderson
Wisconsin DNR
Bureau of Forest Protection Section Chief

"In these times of tight budgets and limited resources, the relationships we cultivate with other fire management agencies are imperative to our success. These relationships are growing stronger with deliberate, focused efforts to work together more efficiently."

Blair Anderson
Bureau of Forest Protection Section Chief

Wisconsin Interagency Fire Council Agreement

Early this year, Wisconsin's Division of Forestry entered into an agreement establishing the Wisconsin Interagency Fire Council. The agreement formalizes our cooperative relationship with several federal agencies with fire management responsibilities in Wisconsin; Forest Service, Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

While the Division of Forestry has responsibility for fire protection in the vast majority of the land in the state, this agreement facilitates our sharing dispatch responsibilities for personnel from all agencies when they go out of state, usually "out west", to fight fire fires for the federal government. Additionally, WIFC allows all agencies to conduct important training jointly, saving significant budget dollars.

More broadly, this agreement will allow us to better help each other with fire suppression work and prescribed burning, so we can all operate more efficiently and effectively.

Blair Anderson
Wisconsin DNR
Forest Fire Management Section Chief

Partners in Wildland Fire Fighting – ARNG 147th Aviation Battalion and DNR



On October 13, 2004, the Department of Natural Resources and the 147th Army National Guard from Madison, Wisconsin held a training session and mock forest fire, with live fire from a controlled burn, in Necedah. This was the first such effort for the State of Wisconsin. Although many other states have developed this relationship with their National Guard units, the Wisconsin DNR and Wisconsin ARNG are just beginning to develop this relationship.

The Sikorsky UH-60 Blackhawk, of which the 147th operates and maintains 14 in Madison, has the potential to be a very valuable tool for the State of Wisconsin's fire fighting arsenal. The Blackhawk is considered to be a Type I helicopter, the highest rating. Its capabilities include an 8,000 pounds lift capacity, cruise speed of 170 mph, 12-passenger carry capacity and multi-engine safety. The 147th has two Bambi buckets capable of carrying 660 gallons of water and 1 heli-basket equipped with a 400-gallon foam induction pump unit to help support our ground suppression resources during extreme forest fire conditions, during a state of emergency, when life and property are imminently threatened.

*The training exercise was conducted
by the DNR to encompass:*

- 🔥 Aviation Policy and SAFETY
- 🔥 Incident Command System/
Organization/Terminology
- 🔥 Missions and Roles
- 🔥 Basic Fire Tactics and Fire Behavior/Fire Shelter

After the ground school was completed, each agency took turns demonstrating each other's operations on the ground before entering the forest fire air space. While in the air, the Blackhawks received instructions from the fire's Air Attack staff to make precision drops. They made 20 drops apiece, roughly 30,000 gallons of water, in little more than one hour. This amount of water would be equivalent to 12 fire department tanker trucks.

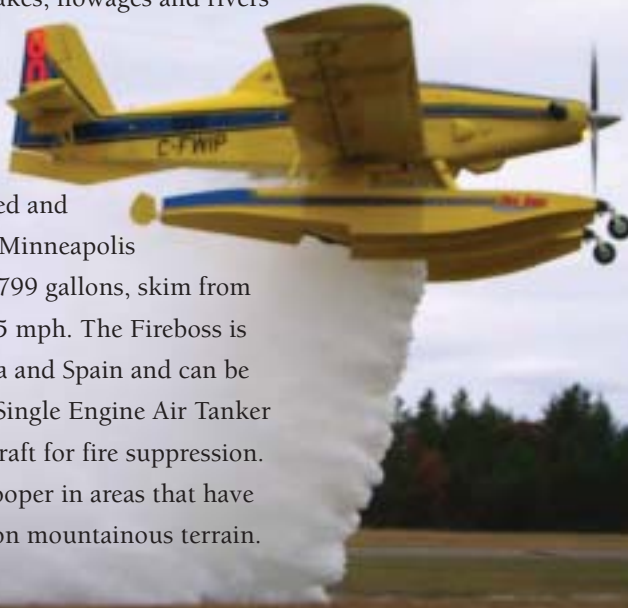
Of the 29,000 wildfires the State of Wisconsin has experienced in the last 19 year only 1%-2% would reach a magnitude to warrant using the Blackhawks. But during that 1%-2% of our fires, the state receives 80 percent of all property damage caused by wildland fires.

These aircraft would only be utilized in emergency forest fire conditions. The state will continue to contract with private aerial suppression forces for initial attack of forest fires in Wisconsin.

*Jim Barnier
Wisconsin DNR
Forest Fire Suppression Specialist*

FIREBOSS Demo at the Solon Springs Airport

What is a FIREBOSS? It is an aircraft with the ability to scoop from open water on lakes, flowages and rivers with the intent to suppress the forest fire with water or foam solution. It is actually an Air Tractor 802F (agriculture spray plane) on floats developed and manufactured by Wipaire Inc, Minneapolis MN. It has the ability to carry 799 gallons, skim from water 3 feet deep and fly at 165 mph. The Fireboss is currently being used in Canada and Spain and can be utilized either as a traditional Single Engine Air Tanker (SEAT) or a scooping type aircraft for fire suppression. It is best when utilized as a scooper in areas that have extensive water sources and non mountainous terrain.



In Wisconsin, when quick initial attack suppression actions are the norm this aircraft can be very effective during initiating fires. It averages roughly 7 minute turn around times to bring 6500 gallons per hour to a fire. With its speed and extensive water locations in Wisconsin it can cover a great deal of area with limited support needs.

The demonstration that was given by Fireboss LLC certainly exhibited its applicability in the role or niche it could play in Wisconsin forest fire suppression program.

*Jim Barnier
Wisconsin DNR
Forest Fire Suppression Specialist*



"Wildland fire education is more than just 'Smokey Bear.' My hope is that the new 'Wildland Fire Lesson Guide' will provide targeted messages to appropriate audiences as well as provide for consistency and flexibility in the classroom."

*Catherine Regan
Wildfire Prevention Specialist*

New K-12 **LEAF** Wildland Fire Lesson Guide is Underway

In 2002, a comprehensive program was developed to promote forestry education throughout Wisconsin called the Wisconsin K-12 Forestry Education Program. Unfortunately, the forest fire aspect was left out due to the complexity of the subject and the need for a more detailed supplement addressing the specifics of wildland fire was put off to a later date.

Therefore in 2004, with the forestry mechanism already in place, a Wildland Fire Lesson Guide is now in progress under the LEAF Learning, Experiences, & Activities in Forestry) Program. The goal of this program is to improve and increase wildland fire education within the Wisconsin school system as well as provide activities for use in the classroom by Wisconsin DNR field staff. This program will also build partnerships with other forestry education stakeholders, provide teacher training opportunities and assist schools with the infusion of standards based forestry education concepts into their classroom curriculum.

LEAF is currently developing the conceptual framework that identifies the key wildland fire concepts for the K-12 activity guides with the assistance of a wide variety of wildland fire stakeholders. Be looking for the unveiling of the curriculum in early 2007.

*Catherine Regan
Wisconsin DNR
Wildfire Prevention Specialist*

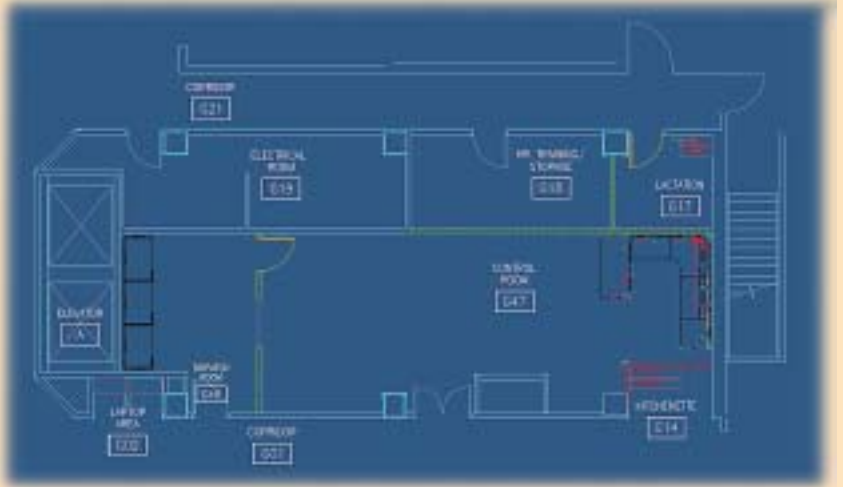
New Emergency Coordination Center Under Construction

Over the last several years the Division of Forestry, the Bureau of Law Enforcement and now the Bureau of Wildlife Management has had a critical need for an area that can be used for the coordination and management of large or significant statewide incidents

Since 1991, the Division of Forestry has become very active in sending our fire fighting resources to other parts of the country. This mobilization effort can occur at any time during the year. After some negotiations, the Department will not only be able to coordinate forest fires, but also assist in the management of tornadoes, floods, hazardous spills, any threat to public safety and assist in chronic wasting disease efforts.



This project initially started out as a coordination center in the mobilization of fire fighting resources. However, the need for a 'DNR emergency coordination center' seemed to be of more value. Therefore, the Department is underway in establishing a multi-functional coordination area in the GEF 2 building that would have staff from Forestry, Law Enforcement, Wildlife, and other functions that assist in the management of DNR emergency coordination efforts.



The area will have the proper workspaces and coordination area properly divided and soundproofed (floor, walls and ceiling) with adequate power (with back up), phone lines and computer jacks and good heating and ventilation to meet the demands of the users of the room. Adjacent to this room there should be another area that could be utilized to have discussions with the public and news media separate from the coordination and dispatch area. This will help ensure that the coordination effort is away from any significant distractions and noise that may be occurring during the incident.

The project is due to be complete and up and running by summer of 2005.

*Ken Terrill
Wisconsin DNR
Forest Fire Operations Manager*

DNR Personnel Responded to Tornado Damage in Adams County



On Wednesday, June 23rd at approximately 7:30 p.m., DNR Forestry personnel from the Wisconsin Rapids Area were called to support local emergency responders in Adams County



following a tornado. The twister touched down just east of Castle Rock Lake impacting approximately 7000 acres in a 1 by 12-mile area. Hardest hit was the town of Easton, with damage also in the adjacent towns of Quincy and New Chester. The Quincy Fire Tower was leveled. Early assessments reported at least 30 homes were destroyed or sustained major damage and 11 people were treated for storm related injuries. The Adams County Sheriff's Department designated Easton Town Hall as the Incident Command Post (ICP).

Forester Ranger Jodi Malin contacted the Sheriff's Department and offered DNR assistance. Several Forestry staff reported to the Friendship Ranger Station. The Adams County Sheriff's Department

requested heavy equipment to help clear roads for emergency response. Immediately, three units from Friendship and one from Necedah were dispatched to the incident. Our DNR Rapids Area ICP supplies and overhead incident personnel were also requested by Incident Command.

DNR staff from Forestry, Wildlife, Parks, and Law Enforcement along with staff from the



U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service remained on scene that night to assist with clearing roads and searching for victims. The DNR Rapids Area Incident Management Team and incident staff coordinated efforts with the Sheriff's Department and local Emergency Management until all the objectives had been accomplished. Those objectives were to coordinate and protect the volunteers that responded to clear roads and driveways for emergency access. The ICP was dismantled late Saturday afternoon.

*Jodi Malin
Wisconsin DNR
Friendship Forester Ranger*



2004 Hazard Mitigation Program

The Bureau of Forest Protection's Hazard Mitigation Program was restored in 2004, after a one-year hiatus when funds were frozen. This year, 21 projects were approved for funding of \$450,000.

Spring fire season was kicked off with 76,700 Living With Fire newspaper inserts placed in 14 newspapers around the state. The insert was also condensed down to three articles and recreated as a restaurant placemat. Special thanks to Jim Gobel of the Spooner Ranger Station for all his help in revamping the insert and creating the placemat! Catherine Regan, Wildfire Prevention Specialist, organized a radio media blitz throughout 2004 that focused on spring burning and targeted messages at specific times of the year around the various human



Fuel reduction on fire breaks at Quincy Bluff. Photo by Hannah Spaul, The Nature Conservancy.

causes of wildfire and Smokey's 60th birthday.

During the spring months, The Nature Conservancy successfully

burned 350 acres at Quincy Bluff and completed new fire break installation on 70 acres of TNC property. Steve Courtney, of the Wisconsin Rapids Areas, contracted with TNC to create and improve fire breaks to make prescribed burning on the land easier and to help protect communities adjacent to the property. In the St. Croix Area, 550 acres of marsh were burned. This effort is part of a prescribed burn program organized by Ed Forrester.

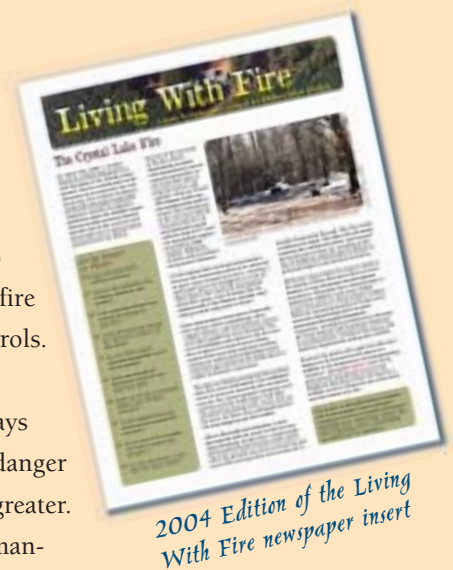
Tim Banaszak contracted with the Waupaca Area Fire District to do spring wildfire prevention patrols. The patrols occurred on days when the fire danger was HIGH or greater. This year, 60 man-hours were contributed

to the patrols, with fire department personnel making contacts with residents and handing out wildfire prevention literature. The patrol engine was equipped with a fire danger adjective or **Burning Permits Required** sign, sending a message to residents and visitors the patrol passed during the 557 miles they patrolled during the spring.



Burnett County prescribed burn. Photo by Ed Forrester, WDNR

In observance of spring Wildfire Prevention Week, the Dodgeville Area fire staff took a unique approach to promoting fire prevention and awareness. Brooke Hushagen, of the Poynette Ranger Station, purchased 3,900 cloth shopping bags and had them imprinted with wildfire prevention messages on both sides. Brooke worked with forest rangers in each of the Dodgeville Area's four fire response units to have the bags handed out during Wildfire Prevention Week. The Wisconsin Grocers Association picked up on the event and ran an article in their monthly statewide magazine.



Hazard Mitigation funds helped support the training of two handcrews. John Nielsen, of the Dodgeville Area and Larry Glodoski, of the Upper Chippewa Area worked to train and equip two handcrews for help with prescribed burning and to be available to assist with fire suppression if needed.

An historic wildfire sign describing the Brockway Fire of 1977 was replaced. There has been a sign in place since 1978 and was replaced once in 1989. Staff in the Black River Falls Area have been doing maintenance on the sign on a yearly basis. Scott Loveland applied for Hazard Mitigation funds to replace the aged sign, making it more appealing to visitors to the area.

Eric Zenz, of the Black River Falls Area, contracted with the Jackson County Forestry and Parks Department to create a fuel break within a 700-acre block of red pine owned by Jackson County. The goal is to widen an existing trail to make it drivable by fire equipment, giving fire control personnel faster access to the area and a greater chance to contain a fire when it's small.

Two wildfire prevention billboards, focused on dangers associated with fireworks, were placed along high-traffic areas in the St. Croix area. Bob Hartshorn oversaw the project in effort to reach all permanent residents, seasonal residents, and visitors to the area and warn them of the wildfire dangers caused by fireworks.

A Smokey Bear theme park was created on the front lawn of the Wisconsin Dells Ranger Station. Mike Warnke and Mark Johnson oversaw the ordering and installation of materials and organized a dedication ceremony around the time of Smokey's 60th birthday. The park includes a 6-foot tall Smokey statue and seating bench on a concrete pad, surrounded by decorative landscaping.

Phase One of the Firewise Grassroots Outreach effort was completed between Memorial Day weekend and Labor Day weekend. A Community Organizer was employed for the summer to conduct fire-prone property assessments, attend local events and association meetings, meet with local officials, and distribute information to local residents regarding fire potential in the area and ways to reduce hazards.

*Jolene Ackerman
Wisconsin DNR
Wildland Urban Interface Coordinator*

"In addition to this year's \$450,000 in Hazard Mitigation projects, the DNR also acquired \$1.6 million for future National Fire Plan grant activities to be completed by 2007."

*Jolene Ackerman
Wildland Urban Interface Coordinator*



First Wisconsin Firewise Community Recognized

Because of its efforts to reduce the vulnerability of homes and landscapes to wildfire, a Marquette County lake association has earned Firewise Communities/USA recognition. The Crystal Lake Club worked with WDNR forestry staff and the Neshkoro Fire Department to conduct a wildfire hazard assessment and develop a plan to address safety concerns. Residents then worked together to implement the plan. An official plaque and recognition materials were presented to residents of the club Memorial Day weekend.

Crystal Lake Club is the first community in Wisconsin to be recognized as a Firewise Community, joining many other communities nationwide that have been recognized since the program's inception in 2002. Congratulations to the Crystal Lake Club for becoming Wisconsin's first Firewise recognized community!

*Jolene Ackerman
Wisconsin DNR
Wildland Urban Interface Coordinator*

"The wildland fire problem continues to be a challenge within the cooperative fire protection area. The Division of Forestry is working on new strategies to address the situation."

Chris Klahn-
Cooperative Fire
Management
Specialist

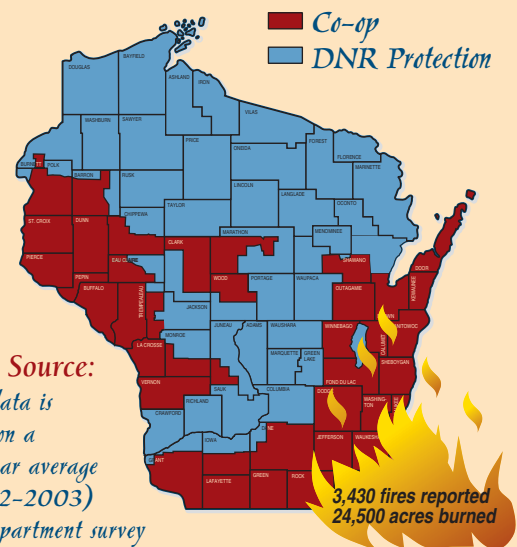
Cooperative Wildland Fire Program

The forest fire protection in the state of Wisconsin is currently organized into three types of protection: intensive, extensive and cooperative. Intensive forest fire protection areas involve significant commitments of DNR forestry staff and suppression equipment in the traditionally heavily forested areas of the state. Extensive forest fire protection areas involve DNR forestry staff and equipment commitment over larger, less forested areas of the state, mostly in the southern half. Cooperative forest fire protection areas rely on the Town Boards and the local fire departments to provide forest fire protection.

Statewide forest fire protection authority is granted to the Department of Natural Resources and the DNR has the flexibility to assist and cooperate with Town Boards with forest fire detection, prevention and suppression. These statutory responsibilities allow the support and cooperation of the DNR in cooperative forest fire protection areas.

A 2001 survey of cooperative fire departments found that 56% had not received wildland fire training in the preceding three years. The recent National Association of State Foresters Fire Department survey indicated that 33% of all cooperative area fire departments had **never** received any wildland fire training. That same survey indicated that fire departments in cooperative areas of the state respond to an average of 3,430 wildland fires burning 24,550 acres every year in Wisconsin.

In order to begin to support these cooperative area fire departments, a wildland fire training program has been initiated. Four experienced Wildland Fire Instructors have been hired to instruct wildland fire topics to cooperative area fire departments.



Topics offered include wildland fire safety, suppression tactics, wildland fire behavior and the Incident Command System. In addition, a comprehensive DNR wildland fire course, "Introduction to Wildland Fire Suppression for Wisconsin Fire Departments" has been developed and will be offered to fire departments at no cost.

This wildland fire training initiative is but one component of the larger Cooperative Fire Program Report prepared by a study team in 2001. The Division of Forestry approved this larger, more comprehensive report as a priority. This comprehensive fire program includes not only wildfire training but incident support, local partnerships, grant administration, equipment assistance, communications assistance, safety, fire prevention, law enforcement advice and assistance and mutual suppression agreements. Due to the limited budgetary support, the wildland training component was selected as a logical first step in any cooperative fire program.

Chris Klahn
Wisconsin DNR
Cooperative Fire Management Specialist

Ranger & Law Enforcement Recertification, Fall 2004

The Bureau of Forest Protection continuing education and training of field rangers developed a training course, which created a sound platform for staff across all experience levels. This 24-hour training session combined a lessons learned approach with a practical field exercise.

The lessons learned captured experience from past forest fire incidents, which created challenges for the Incident Commander. The Incident Commanders shared their decision-making processes with hind site corrections to improve future training and decisions for rangers that may be faced with similar incidents in their careers.

The practical field exercise was developed from new courses in fire investigation. The class was broken up into teams to

investigate and determine various fire causes. This involved a systematic detailed method and application to each fire investigated. Applying the methodology to actual burned sites each team determined the cause location, if lucky enough the actual cause and presented its findings to the class. In most cases the majority of the investigated fires a cause was determined, which ranged from a single matchstick to an accelerants ignition source.

Currently, the Suppression Team, the team responsible for developing core themes of the Ranger Recertification Sessions, have thought to continue the live fire training exercise and will build on past training sessions to ensure the professional needs of our field rangers.

Jim Barnier
Wisconsin DNR
Forest Fire Suppression Specialist



An investigation team narrows down the point of origin and begins a very slow and methodic analysis of the micro indicators which will point to the origin source.

Smokey Bear 60th Birthday Card Contest Winners



Congratulations to Maggie, age 11 from Plum Lake on her entry for the 'Smokey Bear's 60th Birthday Card Contest!' Maggie, among hundreds of other children in Wisconsin, had the opportunity to design a birthday card to celebrate Smokey Bear's 60th birthday in a summer library reading program at her local public library.

The contest began back in June and was a partnership program sponsored by the Department of Public Instruction and the Wisconsin DNR. Smokey Bear turned 60 years old on August 9, 2004.



Catherine Regan
Wisconsin DNR
Wildfire Prevention Specialist

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources provides equal opportunity in its employment, programs, services, and functions under an Affirmative Action Plan. If you have any questions, please write to Equal Opportunity Office, Department of Interior, Washington, D.C. 20240.

This publication is available in alternative format (large print, Braille, audiotape, etc.) upon request. Please call 608/267-7494 for more information.

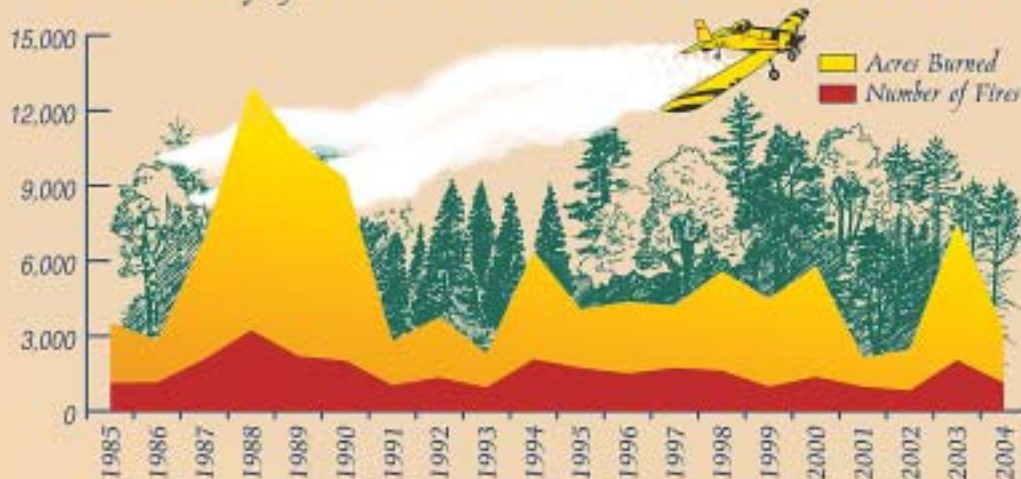
Division of Forestry Law Enforcement Study

The extent of the law enforcement duties of Wisconsin's Foresters and Forester Rangers has produced considerable discussion for many years. As well, the responsibilities of the Division of Forestry to ascertain that these duties are carried out in an efficient and effective manner has been debated. In recent years there have been an increased number of concerns from Forestry field staff regarding woodland owners of Wisconsin not always being properly compensated for wood products being taken from their lands. There has also been concern raised about adequate enforcement in forest fire control. Comments from field staff made it evident that there are many factors that weigh into the ability to address forestry law enforcement issues in Wisconsin. The Division's Forestry Leadership Team (FLT) decided to do comprehensive study of the law enforcement program and its role to address the concerns from the Division of Forestry, the Department of Natural Resources and the woodland owners of Wisconsin.

The FLT, directed a committee be formed to guide the study. The committee consisted of a variety of individuals with varying degrees of enforcement duties that were chosen from within the agency as well as some from outside of Forestry, some carried law enforcement credentials and some did not. The committee established the side boards for the study and has kept in close communication with the FLT to assure direction of goals. The process has been going on for approximately two years and is beginning to take final form. The expectation is to have the final document completed by mid to late summer of 2005, at which point the study report will be presented to the FLT with recommendations for them to review and act upon as they see necessary. Of course, the final goal is to identify shortcomings of the program and address them accordingly to better manage the woodlands of Wisconsin.

*Richard Bucklew
Wisconsin DNR
Law Enforcement Specialist*

20 Year History of Fire in Wisconsin DNR Protection 1985-2004



Graphic Design by Blue Sky Design, LLC